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RECAPTURING THE WONDER IN NATURAL RESOURCES: PERSPECTIVES FROM A COMMUNITY OF LIFELONG LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT: We will present various perspectives of natural resource learning journeys experienced by faculty, student, and staff members of the Bailey Scholars Program within the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University. The Bailey Scholars Program seeks to be a community of scholars dedicated to lifelong learning. All members of the community work toward providing a respectful, trusting environment where we acknowledge our interdependence and encourage personal growth. Individuals will share their experiences and nurture a conversation regarding the challenge and opportunities of building learning communities. We invite others to come share their journeys and discuss opportunities for fostering learning in higher education that value and encourage the wonder and enjoyment of the environment that brings us to the field initially. The experiences we share range from the informal to the formal. Questions: (1) What brings us to natural resources? (2) How can we pursue learning without snuffing out the natural wonder that brought us to our interest in natural resources and the environment? Topics: A. Experiencing the wonder of nature. B. Lost and found on campus. C. Bringing compassion and creativity to the classroom. D. What's grading got to do with it? E. From teaching to learning: freshmen, study-abroad, and graduate experiences. End Result: i. Identify learning experiences that maintain the joy and wonder that originally brings people to the natural resources field. ii. Discuss potential strategies to improve learning experiences in various circumstances.

This will be a two-part session. We'd like to try a structured approach on the first day of the conference by sharing our experiences to give people some food for thought. After the session we'd like to encourage participants to write down experiences or discussion topics on a publicly available space. (See page 31.)